

## Security Operations Continue to Affect Rashid Area

### 4-1 Inf. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers discovered and destroyed an explosively-formed penetrator factory and suspected torture house in southern Baghdad June 19 while conducting clearing operations.

While searching abandoned buildings in the western Rashid District, Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion 38th Infantry Regiment found six EFPs, 24 sticks of C4 plastic explosive, one pipe bomb

without initiator and a rocket-propelled grenade launcher.

A house nearby was also searched and found to contain one 105mm artillery round with a satchel charge attached and duct tape coated with blood and hair. After inspecting the houses Soldiers found materials believed to aid in camouflaging roadside bombs.

An explosive ordnance disposal unit arrived on scene and detonated the cache. However, the resulting explosion was larger than expected and collapsed a nearby home. Soldiers searched the rubble for

any possible trapped civilians.

One female civilian was found dead.

"Our deepest sympathies are with the family of the deceased," said Maj. Kirk Luedeke, spokesperson and public affairs officer for the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. "This unfortunate event is something we are investigating and will take precautionary measures to prevent from happening again."

Earlier in the day, Coalition aircraft dropped six bombs on the palm grove

along the Tigris River in the eastern portion of the Rashid District, targeting an infiltration route and possible cache storage site for al-Qaeda operating in an area that has been used to conduct indirect fire attacks against the International Zone and Coalition outposts.

"This area was used by al-Qaeda in Iraq for its ability to conceal weapons and target civilians and security forces with indirect fires," Luedeke said.

There were no injuries or collateral damage resulting from the air strikes.

## U.S., Iraqi Forces Uncover 70 Pounds of Explosives

By Maj. Sean Ryan

2-2 Inf. Div. Public Affairs Officer

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LOYALTY, Iraq – Soldiers with the 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division and Iraqi Police detained two suspects and uncovered a sizeable cache of explosives June 17.

A jointly-manned checkpoint witnessed a vehicle stop and turn around after seeing Coalition Forces with the Iraqi Police. Soldiers with Troop B, 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, based out of Colorado Springs, Colo., joined with the 3rd Battalion, 8th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division in a pursuit of the vehicle.

After stopping the vehicle, two individuals exited the vehicles and started running away, but both were caught. After searching the vehicle, more than 70 pounds of explosives were found in the trunk of the car.

The two suspects have been detained for questioning and the explosives were destroyed in a controlled detonation by an explosive ordnance team in a secure area.



(Photo by Sgt. Mike Pryor, 2- 82 Abn. Div. Public Affairs)

## Quick as Lightning!

Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, try to get positive identification on a possible sniper after hearing shots fired while out on a patrol in Baghdad's Adhamiyah District June 6.

## Baghdad in Brief

### U.S. Captures Bomb-maker

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers captured a suspected member of an alleged bomb-making cell in Sab al Bor, Iraq June 19.

Soldiers from Battery C, 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery, attached to the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, captured the suspect using information from intelligence sources. In all, the unit detained 14 suspects for questioning during the operation.

### Operation Castine Update

BAGHDAD – Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces conducted a cordon and search operation in the Adhamiyah District June 18, resulting in the capture of three suspects caught with materials used in the manufacture of car bombs. A fourth suspect was also detained during the operation.

“Operation Castine” was conducted by Soldiers from the U.S. Army 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment and Soldiers from the 1st Brigade, 11th Iraqi Army Division.

# U.S., Iraqis Team up in Rusafa for Clearing, Barrier Emplacing

## 2-2 Inf. Div. Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LOYALTY, Iraq – Soldiers with the 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division and Iraqi Security Forces have been on regular clearing operations to reduce sectarian violence and bring increased security to the Rusafa



(U.S. Army photo)

**Iraqi National Police, Soldiers with the 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment and Iraqi Police teamed up a clearing operation in Baghdad's Rusafa District June 13.**

District of eastern Baghdad.

The missions are planned and led by Iraqi Security Forces. The operations are meant to show local residents that the ISF are there to help them, and to demonstrate that National Police will be assuming a greater responsibility in their neighborhoods.

During Operation Eagle Talon June 13, Soldiers with Troop B, 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment joined with Iraqi Police, the 3rd Battalion, 8th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division and the 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 11th Iraqi Army Division to clear a Rusafa neighborhood. They recovered three AK-47 magazines, one shotgun and one chemical protective mask during the operation.

The day prior, U.S. and Iraqi Forces completed a six-week project to emplace 1,814 concrete barriers in the Palestinian Market in Rusafa. The barriers are meant to provide greater security for the market, thereby revitalizing the local economy.

Shop owners have shown strong support for the barriers. One restaurant owner said the barriers make the area safer.

A kiosk owner who sold dresses pointed to a customer and said, “She can shop and is not afraid.”

Arabic Phrase  
of the Day  
*taftiish*

Defined:  
inspection

## Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 113  
Low: 81



Tomorrow

High: 113  
Low: 81



Friday

High: 113  
Low: 83

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# U.S., Iraqi Troops Train for Terrorist Takedowns

**By Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp  
1-1 Cav. Div. Public Affairs**

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Soldiers from the 2nd “Stallions” Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment recently began a partnership to capture terrorists near here by performing Iraqi-led air assault missions with their counterparts in the 3rd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division (Mechanized).

Although they have been training for months to do the air assaults, just prior to each air assault mission, the U.S. and Iraqi troops continue rehearsing each step of each operation with precision movements to keep their skills sharp for the actual missions in which they rapidly dismount aircraft to take down insurgent forces.

This was the scene as they rehearsed together here June 1 on how to assault an objective before an actual air assault mission which took place in the early morning hours of June 2.

“Our doing air assault

missions and working side-by-side with the Iraqi Army has been a really great opportunity to get to the goal of having them trained up to where they can eventually do these missions on their own,” said Louisville, Ky. native 1st Lt. Cecil Wolberton, a platoon leader with Company A, 2nd Bn., 8th Cav. Regt. “The mission we’re going on tonight is going to be good for their confidence, and they’re learning from these air assaults and we’re making them a part of our team and treating them the same as we treat the rest of our guys.”

Wolberton said the focus of the training was on leadership and team building.

“We’re finding that we are improving every time we go out,” he added. “Through the rehearsals and training, we can see any weaknesses we may have and work on those so we’re constantly improving how we do things.”

During the evening rehearsal, Soldiers from the

1st Air Cavalry Brigade assisted the 3rd Bde., 9th IA soldiers and Stallion troops by giving them instruction on the proper ways to conduct air assaults to include everything from how to rapidly board a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter to how to take a fighting position once dismounted, and how best to move without being detected by the enemy.

Mixed lines made up of the Iraqi troops and U.S. Soldiers ran to each UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter quickly climbing aboard and then just as quickly as they had loaded the aircraft, they rapidly exited taking up fighting positions as they practiced for mission.

With the help of aviation assets and aircraft from the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, the Stallions and the 3rd Bde., 9th IA Div. (Mech.) soldiers rapidly hit each objective during air assault operations making these missions much better in many ways than the regular conventional method of going after terrorists in a vehicle convoy, according to Wolberton.

“It’s a rapid and safer method of infiltration and it takes the enemy by surprise, making it much easier to take them down,” said Wolberton.

Over the past month, 2-8 Cav. has had many successes finding weapons caches and taking down insurgents during the air assaults with the help of their Iraqi “brothers-in-arms.”

“We’ve gone on several air assault missions with them and disrupted enemy forces who were working against us (Iraqi security forces and

coalition forces) and the Iraqi civilians. Going after these insurgents like this prevents them from having the ability to attack us,” said Wolberton.

Much like traditions in which Soldiers carry good luck charms, during the air assaults, the Stallions and their Iraqi brothers have their own tradition as well.

“We like to switch our patches with them because they’re our brothers,” said Sullivan City, Texas native Pfc. Joaquin Mendoza, an infantryman with Co. A, 2nd Bn., 8th Cav. Regt. “We take care of each other and it boosts our morale when we do something symbolic like that.”

Mendoza explained what working and training with the Iraqi Army troops means to him.

“Air assaults are great missions and we’re doing the best we can to work with the Iraqis to make them safe and to help train the Iraqi troops,” said Mendoza. “They’re great people doing a great job.”

The evening rehearsals, according to Wolberton, paid off with success.

During the actual June 2 mission, six houses were searched and 17 suspects were detained near Mushada, Iraq.

“This was a pretty important mission,” Wolberton said. “The guys we were looking for here were involved in attacks against Coalition Forces and have hurt everybody, to include members of the Iraqi civilian population. (They) have had a total disregard for the types of collateral damage they’ve been causing.”



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp, 1-1 Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

**Soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment and Iraqi Army troops from the 3rd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division (Mechanized), rehearse moving from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter into fighting positions as they trained at Camp Taji, Iraq June 1.**





(Photos by Sgt. Mike Pryor, 2- 82 Abn. Div. Public Affairs)

## Tight Squeeze!

San Antonio native Spc. Ruben Chavez squeezes his way out of a tiny cubby hole in a wall after climbing in it to search for weapons during a cordon and search operation in Baghdad's Adhamiyah District June 11. Chavez is with Company C, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment based out of Schweinfurt, Germany and operating in the Iraqi capital with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

## Hood Soldier Officially Becomes an American

**Spc. Karly Cooper**  
15th SB, Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Soldiers can get their citizenship in theater after applying and waiting six months. For a citizen there is normally a five-year residency requirement to be eligible to obtain citizenship.

Sgt. Jose Mendoza, a supply sergeant with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Brigade Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) has been approved for citizenship and is about to go thru a naturalization ceremony.

"I am excited to be able to do this, becoming a citizen in Iraq makes me very happy and it does seem a little strange considering the circumstances," said Mendoza.

The Fullerton, Calif., native has been in the Army for eight years now. "There were better opportunities in the Army," he said.

Since he has been serving in the Army and living in America all his life, "There's not much of a difference, I've been treated like a United States citizen all along," he said.

Though serving in the Army, not being a United States citizen did have its downfalls.

"I went to Airborne school, graduated, and then I decided I wanted to go to Ranger School but couldn't go because I wasn't a U.S. Citizen," he said.

To start the process off, he submitted a photo and fingerprints for a background check. He went to his brigade legal office to complete the paperwork and an application. His



**Sgt. Jose Mendoza**

company commander signed a memo stating that he was not flagged or in trouble.

Once the documents were submitted to the Immigration Naturalization Services (INS) the six month wait began.

"I got my letter about six months later and then I got an e-mail from the legal office in Balad," said Mendoza.

The process includes an interview where the applicant must demonstrate the ability to write and speak a sentence in English and pass a 100-question exam.

Now well into his second deployment, he is happy he took the steps that he needed to get naturalized. "My father wanted me to do this a long time ago, but I procrastinated and really should have done it on my first deployment," he said.

Now that his time of being an immigrant is at an end, the beginning of a new life as a citizen it is opening up many possibilities. Mendoza plans to one day to join the Special Forces as a weapons sergeant.

"I really don't reel any different and I considered myself a citizen before but I am very proud," said Mendoza.



(Photo by Spc. Nathan Hoskins, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

Pittsburgh native Sgt. Bryan Funyak, a truck driver for Company E, 2nd "Lobo" Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cav. Div., dives for the ball in a game of pool volleyball during the Lobos' organizational day at Camp Taji, Iraq, June 14.

## 'Lobo' Battalion Takes a Water Break at Camp Taji

By Spc. Nathan Hoskins  
1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Drink it, jump into it, swim in it, and anything else a Soldier surrounded by sand can think of.

That, along with some other fun activities, was what Soldiers of the 2nd "Lobo" Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, were doing on their organizational day, June 14.

"(Organizational day) is a chance for Soldiers to get out and enjoy themselves away from work. It kind of fosters a competitive attitude between the companies, but in the end, of course, we're all one team," said Capt. Thomas Whipple, commander of Company E "Renegades," 2-227th.

The Lobos participated in a four-on-four basketball tournament, horseshoes, volleyball and the much anticipated pool events, said Whipple a Lyndonville, N.Y., native.

Among the pool events were the relay race, the biggest splash competition and the belly flop competition, said Stafford, Va., native Spc. Erica Drew, a radio communications security repairer for the Renegades.

"The belly flop (competition) is judged by the biggest splash, technique and how much pain is perceived to be given" said Drew, who consequently won the event.

While deployed, a lot of Soldiers may feel like they are repeating the same day over and over, but this fun-filled day pulled



Fort Hood, Texas, native Spc. Gregory McCarter brings in the win for his company in the four man relay race during the Lobo's organizational day at Camp Taji, Iraq, June 14.

them from their daily routines, said Drew.

"(The organizational day) really breaks up the redundancy," she said. "I would normally be staring at a radio hoping it will do tricks."

Sacramento, Calif., native Spc. David McKenna, an aviation operations specialist and battalion jokester, felt the organizational day was a much needed stress reliever.

"I would much rather be having fun out here (than in the office). I understand you have to take (your job) serious, but sometimes you just have to let loose," he said after chasing people to try and give them hugs while wearing a gross amount of sunscreen lotion.

After the relay race was finished and large amounts of water was displaced by the biggest splash contest, bellies turned pink due to the belly flop contest. The cringes of pain were evident not only by

those participating, but also in those who were poolside, watching.

Once all the events came to a close, there was a tie between Co. E and Co. D, 2-227th, which was decided by a race across the length of the pool by the commanders of the companies.

The Renegade commander, Whipple, took on New Orleans native, Capt. Craig Dupuy, commander of Co. D.

After the waves subsided and the thrashing of legs and arms came to a halt, Whipple took home the win in the pool events for his company only to be challenged at a game of poker.

Yet, it wasn't all fun and games. The Lobos took time to remember the brigade's fallen heroes by conducting a missing man formation. The activities in the pool nearly stood still as the formation of five helicopters composed of one CH-47 Chinook at the lead and four UH-60 Black Hawks, passed nearby.

As the birds made their second pass, one of the Black Hawks broke ranks and flared up out of the missing man formation in tribute to the fallen Soldiers.

Although many of the Soldiers will feel the results of their day in the sun during their next shift, it appears, by the smiles on their faces, that it was well worth it, said Whipple.

"I'm enjoying myself, but more importantly my Soldiers are enjoying themselves," he said. "It gets Soldiers out, gets them physical, (and) lifts their spirits."